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ABSTRACT

This unit focuses on Japanese radio exercises which became popular in Japan just after World War II and are still used among students and workers in companies to help raise morale and form group unity. The exercises reflect the general role of exercise in Japanese culture--to serve as a symbol of unity and cooperation among the Japanese, as well as to raise energy levels and encourage good health. The purpose of the exercises is not to encourage students to become athletes but to push themselves and develop unity with their classmates. There are 13 exercises and a pronunciation guide. Students learn how to count from 1 to 10 in Japanese and to understand the cultural and historical context in which the exercises developed. (EH)

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Japanese Radio Exercises

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JAPANESE RADIO EXERCISES

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Jocelyn Young, Asia/Pacific Project, China Assistant, revised *Japanese Radio Exercises* in 1996 and coordinated the production of the videotape, which was designed to supplement the written curriculum of *Japanese Radio Exercises*. This 1996 revision was made under the direction of Jane Boston, SPICE Director, and Gary Mukai, Asia/Pacific Project Director.

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Unit Introduction

JAPANESE RADIO EXERCISES

Rationale and Context

Japanese radio exercises became popular just after World War II in Japan. Defeat in World War II was particularly devastating for Japan. Japan experienced psychological disillusionment, loss of prestige, and general confusion, facing problems like lack of housing, sanitation problems, and lack of food. Therefore, after World War II there was a period of reconstruction, during which energy was focused on the educational, physical, and structural reconstructing of Japan. Morale needed to be raised among the Japanese people. Japanese radio exercises were designed to play a role in this purpose.

These exercises reflect the general role of exercise in Japanese culture—to serve as a symbol of unity and cooperation among Japanese, as well as to raise energy levels and encourage good health among the people.

Japanese radio exercises are especially popular among students and workers in companies. Physical development is integral to the curriculum in elementary and secondary schools. Most often the entire school practices these exercises during the morning before classes begin. Attendance is taken, so students are required to attend these sessions. The purpose of these exercises is not to encourage students to become athletes but to push themselves and develop unity with their classmates.

Unit Goals

Knowledge

- to introduce students to a form of exercise in Japan known as "Japanese Radio Exercises"
- to understand the cultural and historical context in which these exercises developed
- to learn how to count from one to ten in Japanese

Attitudes

- to foster a positive attitude toward exercise and physical fitness

Skills

- to develop muscle toning and flexibility

unit introduction

Materials

- Video Recorder
- Videotape, included
- Handout #1, *Japanese Numbers*
- Handout #2, *Japanese Writing Practice*

Time

These exercises can be adapted to fit almost anywhere into your curriculum. Students in Japan usually begin the day with these exercises, and sometimes end the day with them as well. Likewise, those who work in companies often use these exercises to either begin the day or as a "coffee break" during mid-morning or mid-afternoon.

Grade Levels

This unit is designed for all age levels, including elementary, secondary, university, and adult students.

Subjects

- Social Studies
- Physical Education
- Japanese Studies

Icons

For easier reference the following icon is used throughout the unit:

Video Cassette

Opening Activity

COUNTING IN JAPANESE

Introduction

The Japanese radio exercises, as demonstrated in this unit and the accompanying videotape, are performed with simple piano background music and a man counting out the exercises in Japanese. To help students understand how the exercises are counted in Japanese, this opening activity introduces students to Japanese numbers.

Objectives

- to teach students how to count in Japanese
- to help students follow the radio exercises by counting

Materials

- Handout #1, *Japanese Numbers*
- Handout #2, *Japanese Number Writing Practice*

Suggested Procedures

1. Introduce each number individually. Ask students to practice pronouncing the numbers with you. See the Appendix for a Japanese pronunciation guide.

2. You may find it helpful to either write the numbers on the board or post Handout #1, *Japanese Numbers*, on the board so that students can see the numbers. Handout #1 shows the stroke order of the Japanese characters.

3. As a possible supplementary activity, have students practice writing the numbers in Japanese on Handout #2.

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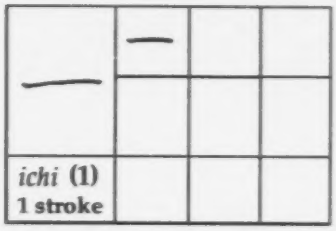
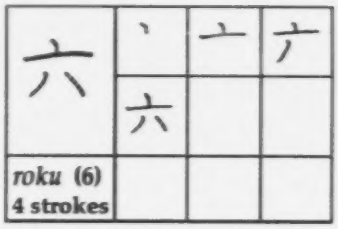
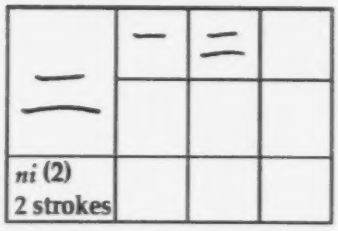
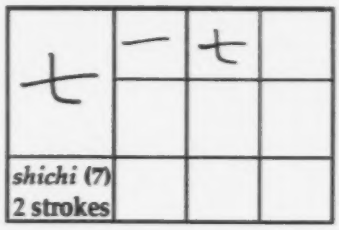
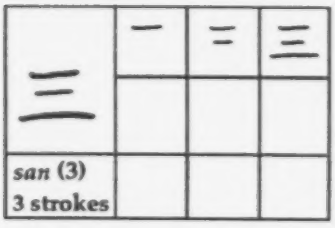
JAPANESE NUMBERS

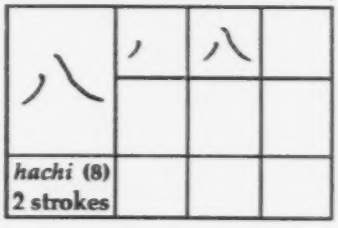


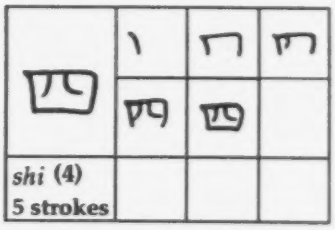


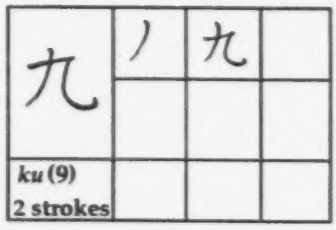


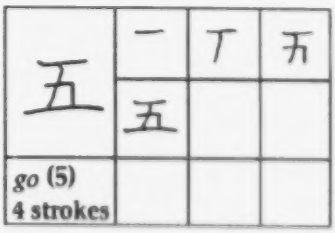


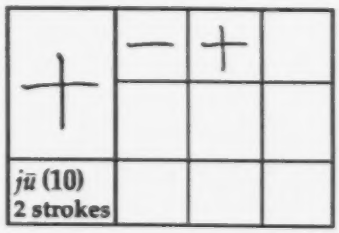




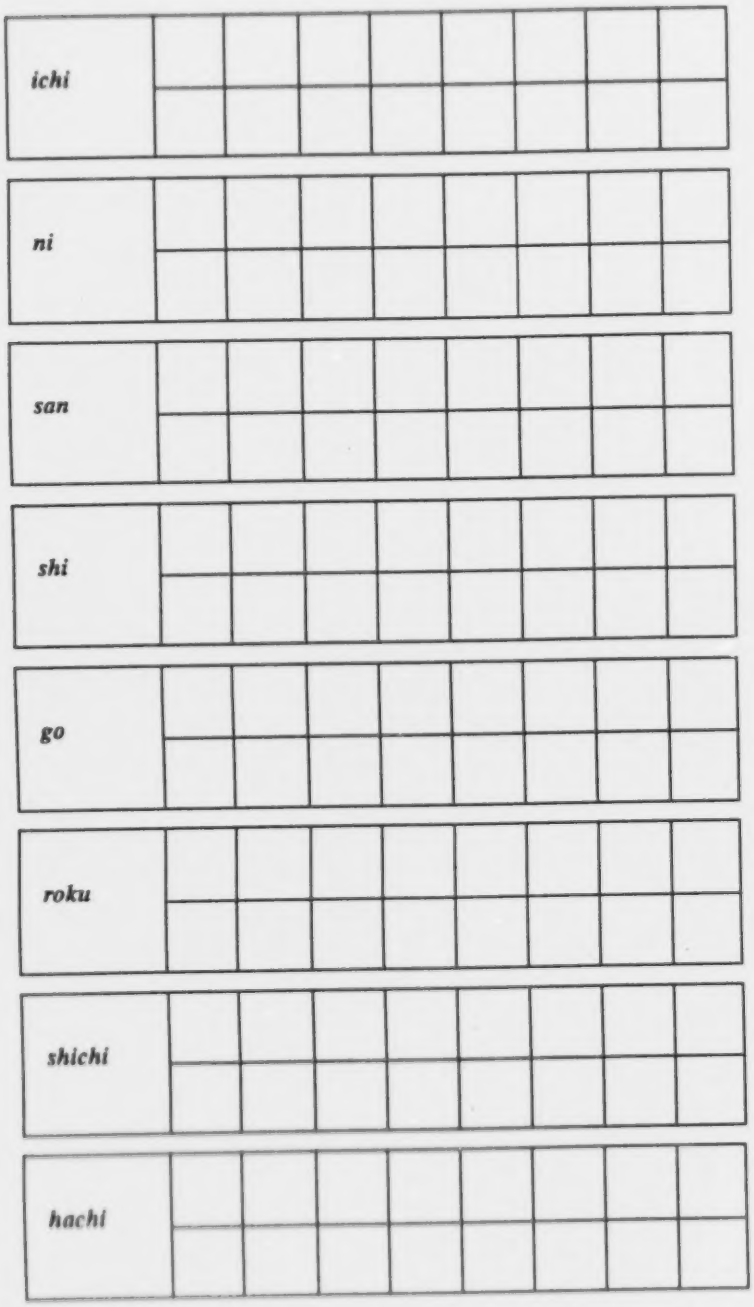








JAPANESE NUMBER WRITING PRACTICE (1 OF 2)



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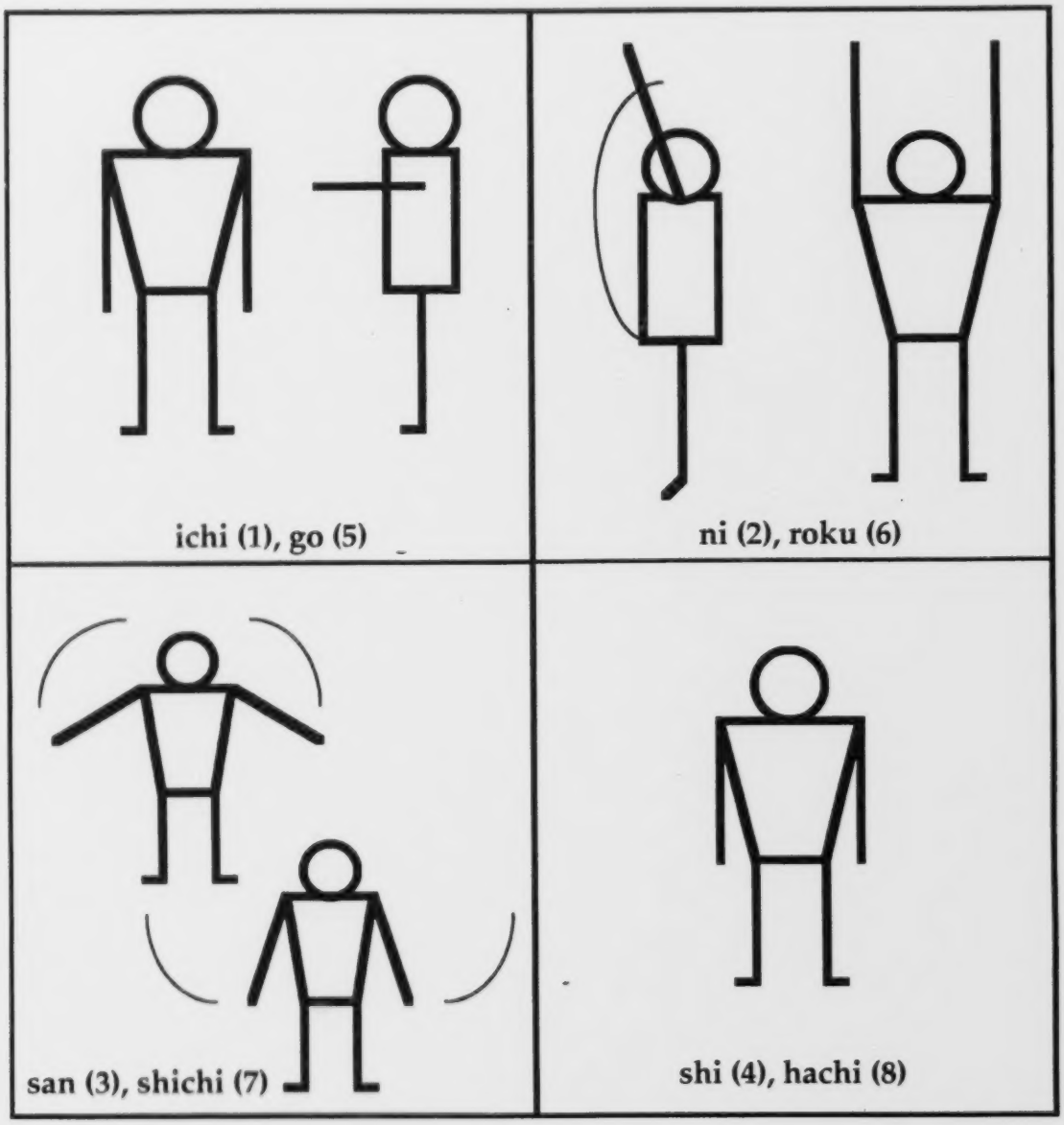
JAPANESE NUMBER WRITING PRACTICE (2 OF 2)

kyū								
jū								



1. Stretch arms out directly in front of body (1,5) and straight up overhead (2, 6). Bring arms slowly (3,7) back down to sides (4, 8).
   2 times, 4 counts each

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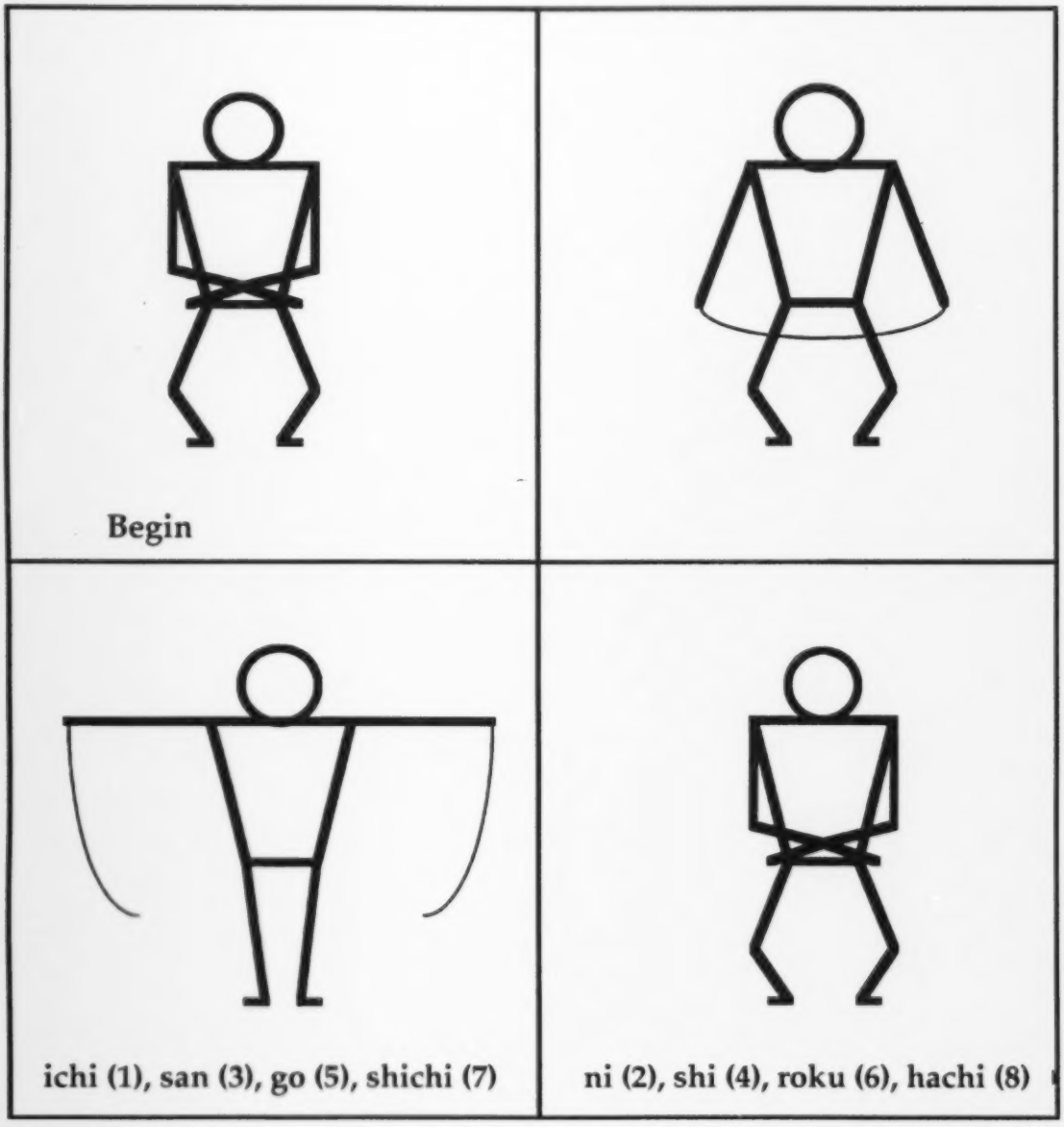
exercise 2



2. Bend knees while crossing hands in front and bringing them straight out to the sides (1, 3, 5, 7), in a big semi-circle, then return to beginning position (2, 4, 6, 8). *2 times, 8 counts each*

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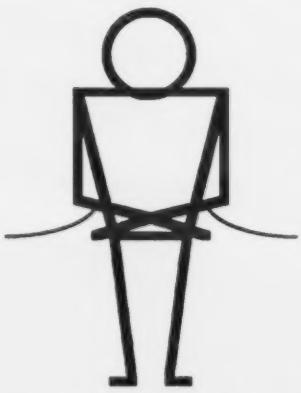
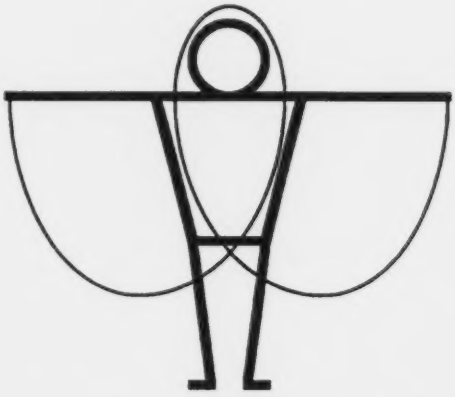


ichi (1), san (3), go (5), shichi (7)



ni (2), shi (4), roku (6), hachi (8)

3. Start with arms crossed in front. Make big, complete circles with both arms (1, 3, 5, 7), criss-crossing arms in the beginning and separating them at the end of the circles (2, 4, 6, 8). Then reverse direction, starting with arms separated and ending with arms crossed. *4 times, 4 counts each*

exercise 4

4. With feet in straddle position and arms crossed in front (4, 8), extend arms to shoulder-height (1, 5). Return arms to crossed position (2, 6) and then throw arms straight up into a V and lean back slightly (3, 7). *4 times, 4 counts each*

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5. Bend trunk to left side (1, 5), with right arm overhead. Return to standing position. Bend again (2, 6), extending further down the second time. Repeat on the right side (3, 4, 7, 8). *2 times, 8 counts each*

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exercise 6

6. With feet apart, bend at waist and touch floor in front; bounce 3 times (1, 2, 3) and on 4th count, return to standing position (4). Bend back with hands on waist for three more counts (5, 6, 7) and return to standing position on the 4th count (8). *2 times, 8 counts each*

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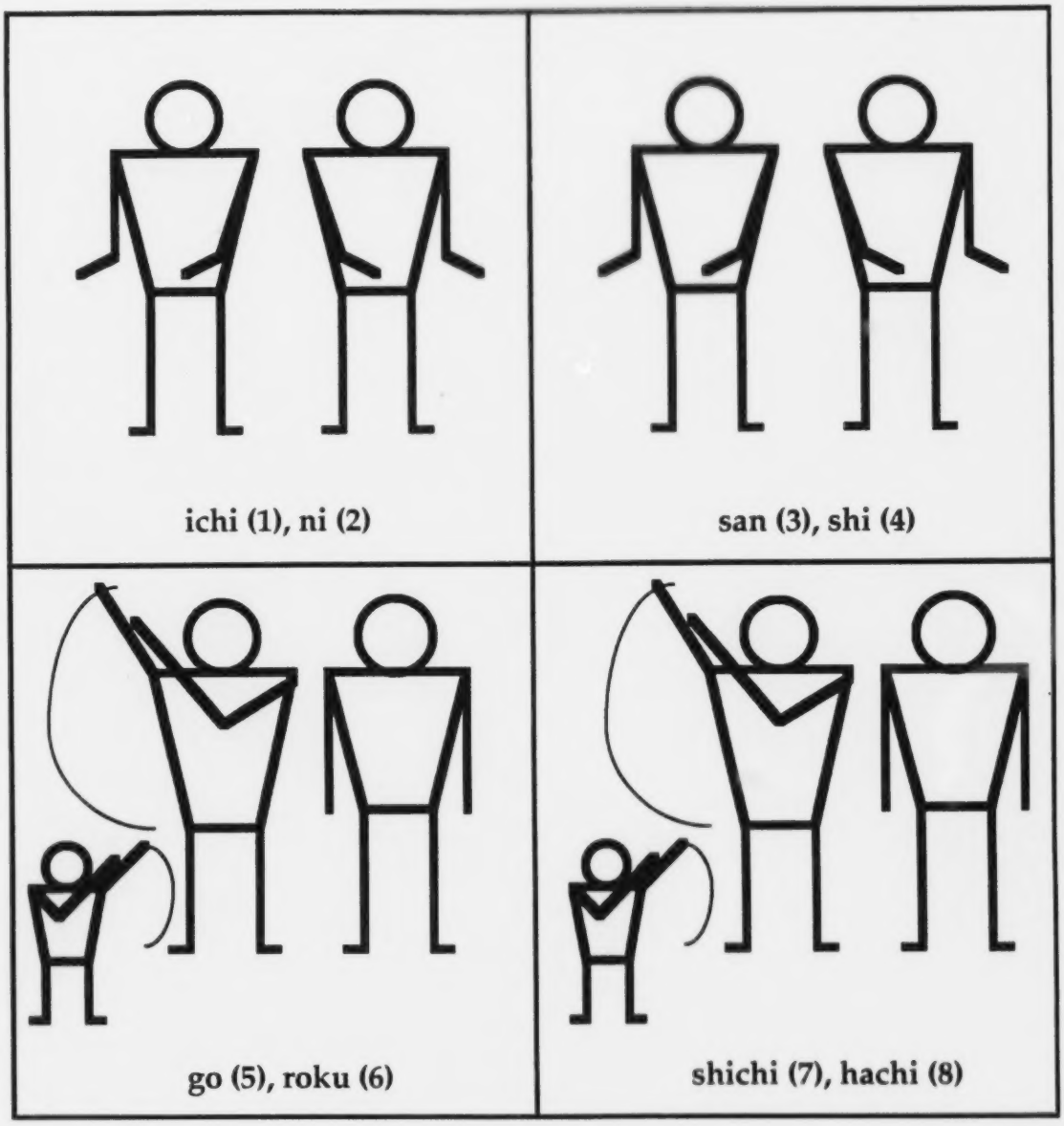
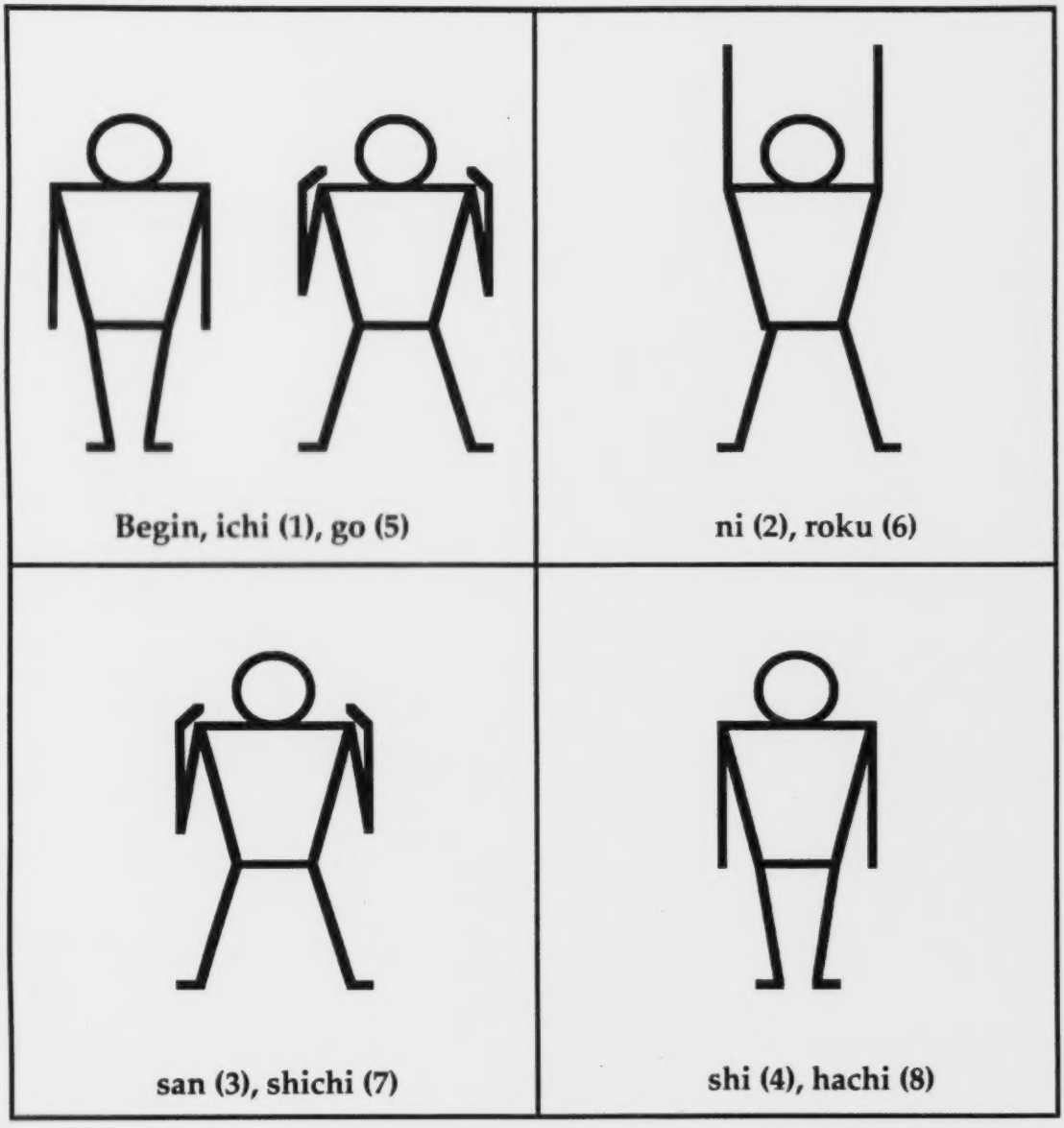


7. Loosely swing arms around waist in small movements (left-1, right-2, left-3, right-4); extend both arms up and over left shoulder (5), then back down to sides (6) and again up and over left shoulder (7) and down to the sides (8). Repeat on right side, starting small movements around waist on the right side (right, left, right, left), etc. *Once on each side, 8 counts each*

exercise 8



8. Step to the left with left foot, simultaneously raising hands to shoulders (1, 5). Extend arms straight overhead (2, 6). Return hands to shoulder position (3, 7). Then bring feet back together and arms back down to sides (4, 8). Repeat on right side. The second time on each side, stretch limbs more fully, throwing head back when arms are extended overhead. *Repeat twice, 8 counts each*

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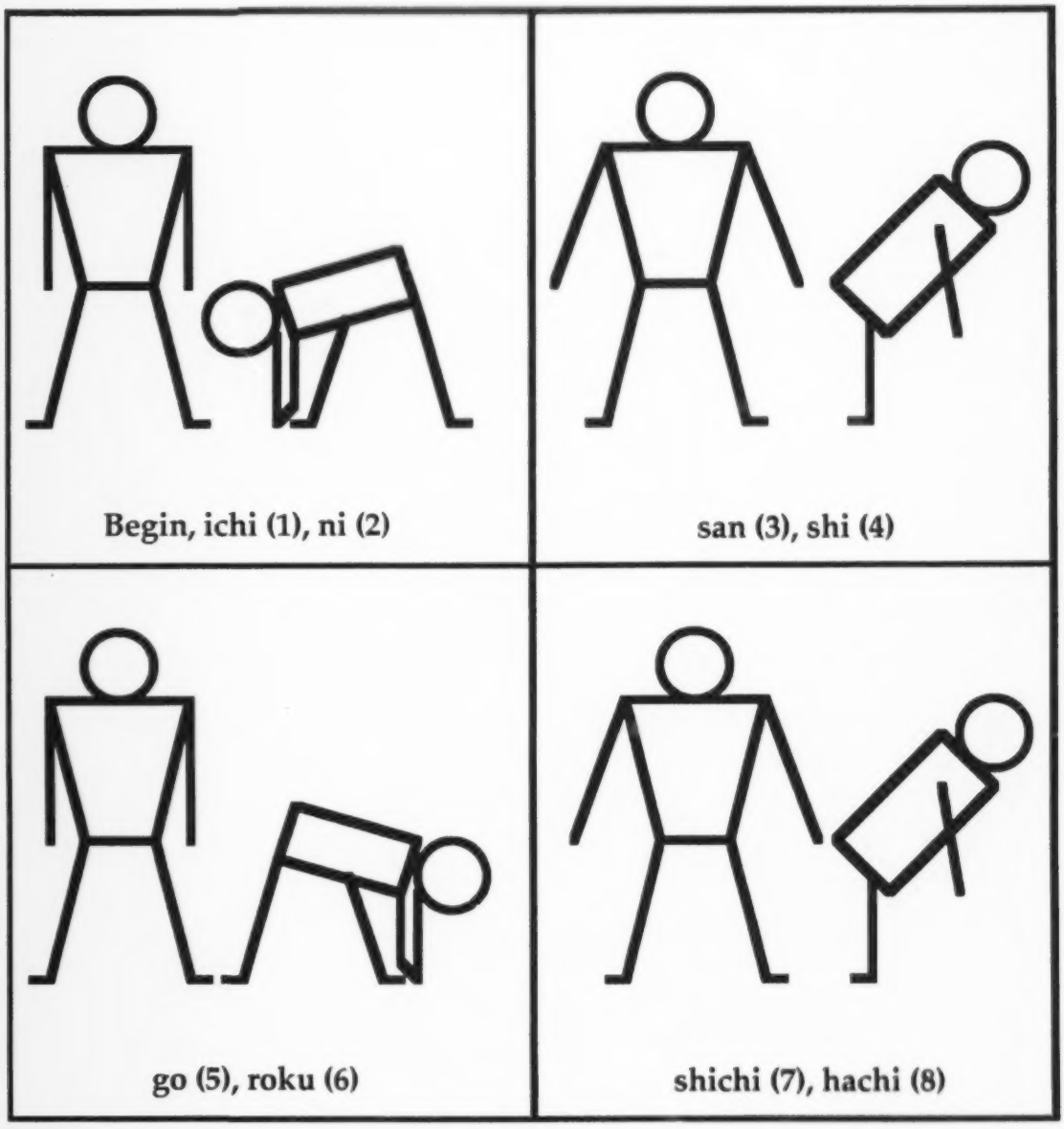


Begin, ichi (1), ni (2)

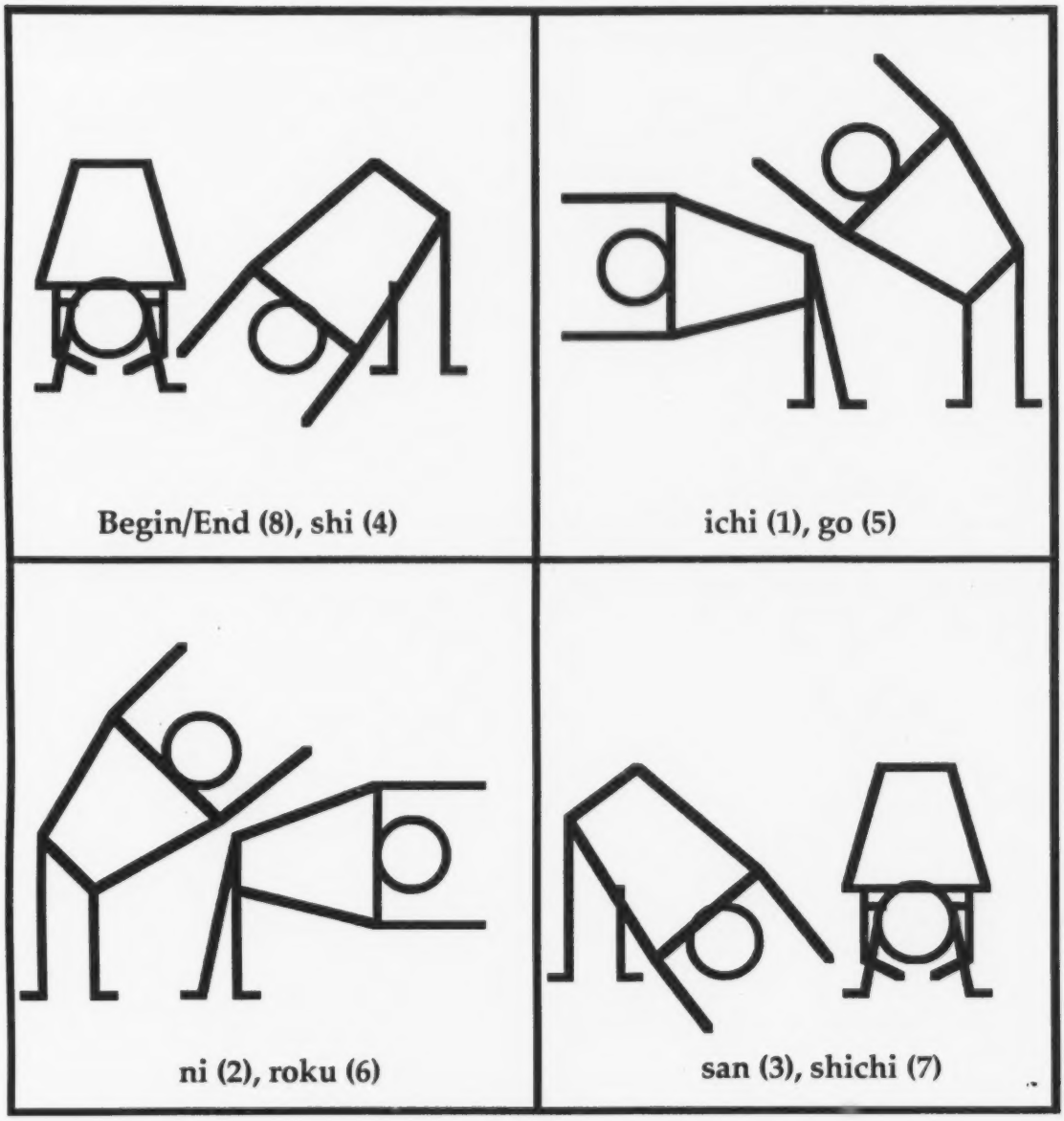
san (3), shi (4)

go (5), roku (6)

shichi (7), hachi (8)

9. Place feet in straddle position. While bending at trunk, touch both hands to left foot twice (1, 2). Straighten trunk and bend backwards for 2 counts (3, 4), with arms extended slightly to the side. Repeat on right side (5, 6, 7, 8). *Repeat twice, 8 counts each*

exercise 10



10. Touching arms to floor, make a big circle to the left side (1), over the head (2), to the side (3) and back down to the floor (4). Reverse direction and return to standing position, feet together (5, 6, 7, 8).
3 times, 8 counts each

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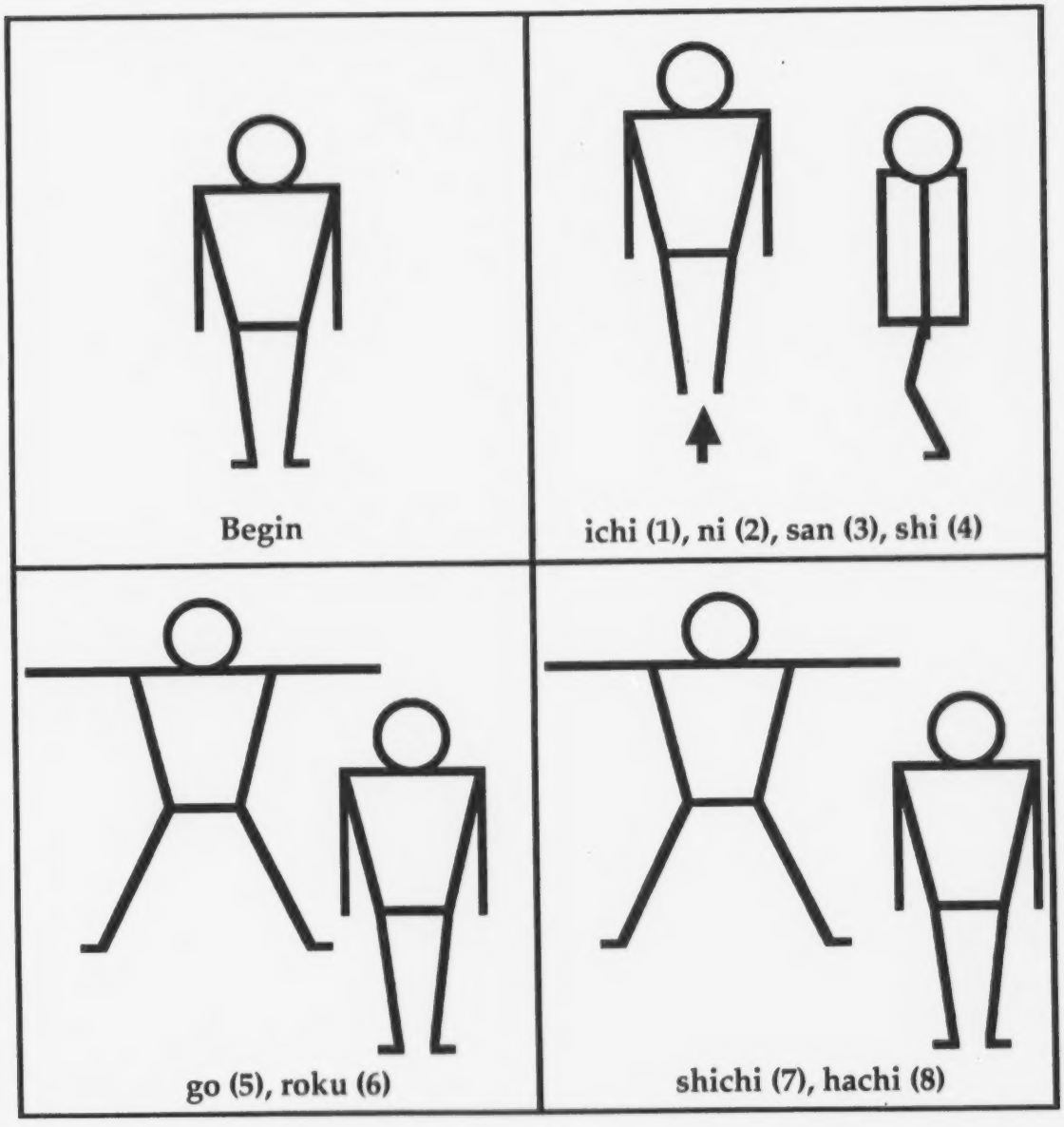
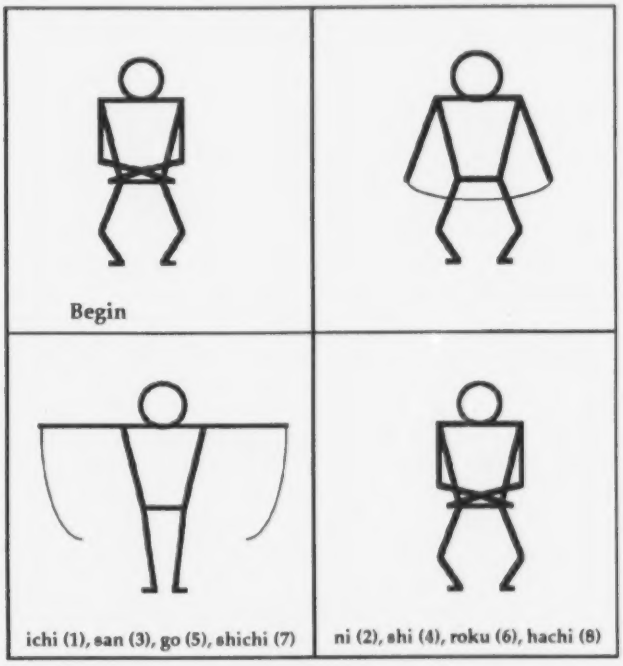
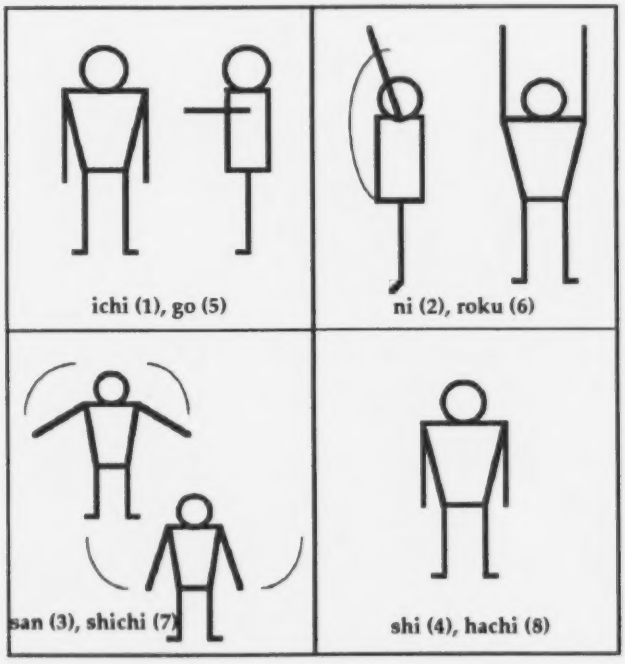


11. Jump up on toes 4 times (1, 2, 3, 4) and bend knees while landing. Follow with a half jumping jack (arms extend out only to shoulder level-5). Return to standing position (6) and repeat jumping jack (7, 8). *3 times, 8 counts each*

exercises 12 and 13



12. Repeat Exercise 2. *2 times, 8 counts each*



13. Repeat Exercise 1. *4 times, 4 counts each*

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APPENDIX

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PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

The five Japanese vowels are essentially the same as the vowel sounds for Spanish. Remember that the Japanese vowel sounds are pure vowels and always are pronounced the same, unlike the English "a," which can be pronounced in many ways (for example, "father," "date," and "hat" are pronounced with differing "a" sounds).

a	as in "father"
i	as in "pizza"
u	as in "true"
e	as in "pet"
o	as in "port"

Sometimes two or more vowels appear in sequence (for example, "aoi," which refers to a shade of blue). In these cases, each sound is pronounced distinctly, though without a glottal sound between them. However, double vowels (for example, "ii," meaning "good") are generally just lengthened without distinguishing each component. Thus it takes twice as long to pronounce the doubled vowel compared to its single counterpart.

The five Japanese vowels can be syllables in themselves or they can be combined with consonants to make other syllables. The consonants in Japanese have the following approximate sounds:

b	as in "ball"
ch	as in "chair"
d	as in "duck"
f	between "food" and "hood"
g	as in "goat"
h	as in "ham"
j	as in "jam"
k	as in "kite"
m	as in "mitten"
n	as in "nest"
p	as in "pig"
r	between "rain" and "lain"
s	as in "sun"
sh	as in "ship"
t	as in "turtle"